
OPERATION "SENTINEL"

PREPARING FOR OLYMPIC DAM

Preparation for the St. John contingent to be on site during the protest demonstration at Olympic Dam started months ago. Team Leader Lloyd Rogers was involved in discussions with Police and did a reconnaissance of the far northern site.

Instead of travelling to Roxby Downs by road vehicle, an aircraft was chartered and flown by Communications Project Officer Frank Richardson. Service Superintendent Neil Copley also made the trip. Frank Richardson's skills in photography were also put to good use as these pictures show.



Pilot Richardson and Co-pilot Rogers with St. John Air Force 1 at Woomera.



The St. John Centre, Olympic Dam.



Olympic Dam Village.

— THE TEAM —

A team of 13 St. John Officers under the command of Assistant Country Superintendent Lloyd Rogers provided a 24 hour First Aid and Ambulance Service at Olympic Dam between August 17 and September 9.

710 people were treated and five were evacuated to Hospital — four by road ambulance to Woomera and one by RFDS aircraft to Port Augusta. The main problems suffered by those requiring attention were sickness related to a change of environment, dust in the eyes, coughs, colds and splinters. The patients included police, CFS staff and protesters.

Twice daily an ambulance crew made a "run" to the protesters camp to give any First Aid treatments necessary.

The Olympic Dam "St. John Centre" was impressive. The Mobile Communications Unit, Mobile Radio Mast, Mobile First Aid Unit, "Stand by Room", three ambulances and two support vehicles were all very visibly located on reaching the town site.

The St. John team earned the respect of everyone at Olympic Dam. The Police Commander of the Olympic Dam operation, Chief Superintendent Des Critchley, said

"The St. John Officers performed their duties in an impartial fashion and co-operation we received from them was first-class. We couldn't have asked for anything more from them".

In an appreciative gesture to our fellows, the protesters baked a cake appropriately decorated with wild cherries in the shape of a cross.

Commenting on the St. John involvement in "Operation Sentinel", team leader Lloyd Rogers said, "Perhaps our greatest achievement was that people were able to keep working due to the treatment we gave them".

As one would expect, put a group of fellows together in that situation and there are the lighter moments — like the Ambulance Officer who was "promoted to Centre Officer for acting beyond the call of duty".

For this, "Bruce" Pinkard received his rank markings with due ceremony. Frank Richardson did not spoil his reputation of keeping meticulous care — he was seen polishing his radio tower during the day and heard (but not seen) also polishing the tower at night.

(There were numerous other lighter moments but the Editor has decided that the innocent should be protected.)

The team was:

Lloyd Rogers

Commanding Officer

Neil Copley

Second-in-Command

(Port Augusta)

Frank Richardson

Communications

David Schilling

Whyalla

Gerry Oliver

Renmark

Tony Willis

Gawler

Brian Greig

Murray Bridge

John Pohl

Victor Harbor

Peter Coombe

Metropolitan

Graham Robertson

Metropolitan

Bill Bourne

Metropolitan

Cliff Pinkard

Metropolitan

Tony van Vugt

Metropolitan



Left to Right: Peter Coombe, Tony Willis, David Schilling (hidden), Brian Greig, John Pohl, Gerry Oliver, Graham Robertson, Lloyd Rogers, Cliff Pinkard, Tony Van Vugt, Frank Richardson, Bill Bourne, Neil Copley.



"Bruce" Pinkard being promoted. Note the length of the Centre Officer's epaulette.



L. to R.: Peter Coombe, John Pohl, Bill Bourne with moustache — our new "Knights of St. John" at the Operation Sentinel Fancy Dress Revue.



A smooth landing wins First Prize for the police officer masquerading as Rescue 1.